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OCI No. 2200/63

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Current Intelligence
2 July 1963

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Insurgency in Laos, South Vietnam, and Iran

1. Laos

a. The Communists continue their military pressure against neutralist positions in south-central Laos and against neutralist and rightist positions on the Plaine des Jarres and north of Vientiane in the Vang Vieng area, but they have made no significant advances in the past week. Pathet Lao guerrillas have destroyed a large bridge on Route 13 south of Savannakhet, interdicting traffic to Pakse, and there are unconfirmed reports that the Pathet Lao may be building up strength for an attack on Attapeu.

b. Total North Vietnamese troop strength in Laos has been re-estimated at 10 to 12 battalions (a probable increase of about two battalions) and some 3,000 advisers, for a total strength of about 8,000. In view of the North Vietnamese capability for rapid and free movement across the border, actual strength probably fluctuates considerably. Probably of greater significance than total North Vietnamese strength are reports that North Vietnamese troops are in positions in the Plaine des Jarres area and southern Laos to spearhead or at least back up Pathet Lao attacks.

2. South Vietnam

The internal situation is increasingly serious as a result of mounting Buddhist restiveness, and further disturbances are likely in the near

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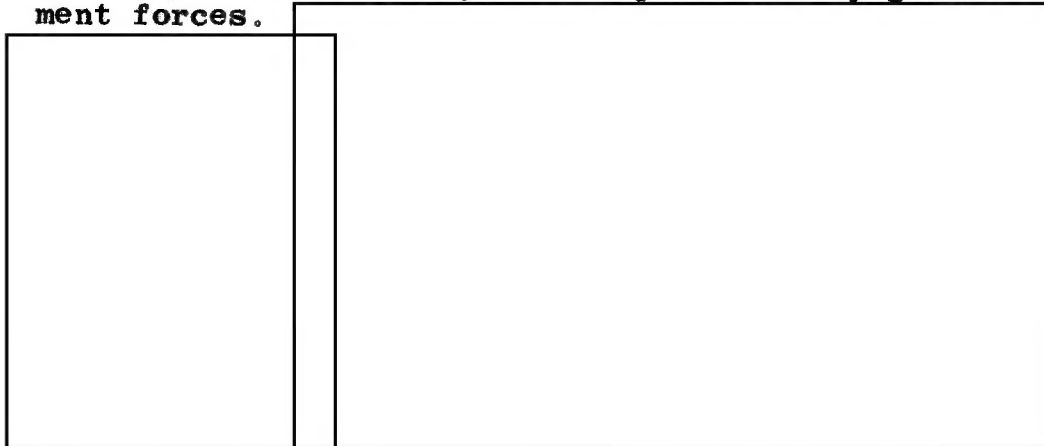
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future. The Buddhist crisis has so far had little appreciable effect on conduct of military operations against the Viet Cong. Heavy Communist losses were claimed by the government as a result of its actions last week even though the number of Viet Cong attacks rose sharply, indicating that the rainy season has not yet affected the Communist capability for periodic intensification of activity. Viet Cong prisoners have furnished evidence of the infiltration of 165 political agents from North Vietnam in small groups since last fall, but frequent reports of the infiltration of military units since early September remain unconfirmed.

3. Iran

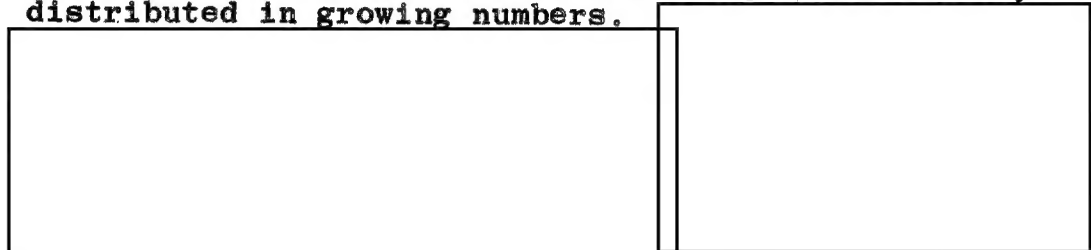
a. Fars Province - Tribal dissidence appears to have ceased. The area of the March-May fighting is still occupied and patrolled by government forces.

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c. Religious Dissidence - Leaflets bitterly denouncing the Shah are being clandestinely distributed in growing numbers.

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